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AF seeks complete review

■ Space launch chief:
failures dictate process

By Senior Master Sgt.
Andrew Stanley

WASHINGTON — Even though investigators have found “no common hardware or software thread in six recent launch vehicle accidents,” the Air Force ICBM and Space Launch Division chief says the failures dictate that the entire process of hurling military and commercial hardware into space should be completely reviewed.

Col. James Puhek has spent most of his life around launch pads and the space program. He recalls the development of the old Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile program that sent early payloads of machines and men into the final frontier.

“Using these ‘Legacy systems,’ including Atlas, Titan and Delta rockets, America has tried over the years to make access to space a routine event,” the colonel said. “However, these systems were designed with 1960s’ technology, had a different mission than today and a lot more program oversight.

“Maybe we’ve gone a bit too far as a



The Titan IVB is a heavy-lift space launch vehicle used to carry government payloads such as Defense Support Program, Milstar and National Reconnaissance Office satellites into space.

nation by treating space access as routine and fully operational with systems not designed to meet today’s higher standards,” Colonel Puhek said. “I don’t know the answer, but we’re finally looking at such possibilities now, as we should.”

On May 19, President Clinton ordered the Defense Department, Central Intelligence

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DOD details prevention programs

WASHINGTON — A community-based suicide-prevention program devised by the Air Force will be the model for the rest of the Department of Defense — and perhaps elsewhere in the federal government — as part of an overall mental health program announced June 7 by the White House.

Combat stress control, for which the Air Force is also a key player, also topped the DOD presentation at the White House forum on mental health.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. Sue Bailey unveiled the details of these two major policies an-

nounced by President Clinton. One is an initiative to expand the community approach to a suicide prevention program. The other concerned a plan to implement a combat stress-control program.

Dr. Bailey discussed the plans during a breakout session entitled “Primary Care, Prevention and the Life Cycle” at the White House Conference on Mental Health: “Working for a Healthier America” at Howard University in Washington.

The president announced expansion of the Air Force suicide prevention pilot program

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NEWSBYTES

Iraq fires on coalition

Responding in self-defense June 8, U.S. Air Force F-16C Fighting Falcons and F-15E Strike Eagles dropped GBU-12 precision-guided munitions on Iraqi military communication facilities east of Mosul. The facilities were used to pass location information on Operation Northern Watch aircraft to Iraqi anti-aircraft artillery units.

Damage to Iraqi forces is being assessed. All coalition aircraft departed the area safely.

Military champion dies

Zachary Fisher, 88, a Brooklyn-born contractor who turned a lifelong love of the military into centers to help service families throughout the nation, died June 4 in New York.

A supporter of the military in general, he was renown in the Air Force for his Fisher Houses that serve families of patients at service hospitals.

He also had pledged money for military child-care centers and programs for disabled children of military personnel. These included 26 Fisher Houses built around the country at major military and Veterans Administration hospitals during the last nine years.

Roving Sands exercise

U.S. Army Forces Command will conduct Roving Sands 99, the world’s largest joint theater air and missile defense exercise, June 15-27. Roving Sands 99 combines command, control, communications and computer elements; air defense artillery; and aircraft of the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy, as well as multinational forces into a joint integrated air defense system.

More than 16,000 service members will participate in the exercise.



Letters to the editor

U.S. Air Force Online News publishes letters based on their appeal to an Air Force-wide audience each week.

Send your letter to the U.S. Air Force Online News staff by completing the online form at <http://www.af.mil/newspaper/>

Due to the number of letters, not all letters can be published. Letters may be edited for grammar and length. Only letters accompanied by a valid name and email address will be considered.

Proud to serve

Do not offer condolences or regrets that Stop-Loss has prevented me from retirement. I am a proud member of the Air Force with over 20 years' honorable service. Regardless of my plans in the civilian sector, my job is to continue to do my best, live and practice our core values and influence our younger airman in a positive way to actively make positive change in the Air Force. When Stop-loss is over, I will re-prepare myself to enter the civilian sector. Until then, it is my duty and privilege to serve my country.

Master Sgt. Jeffrey A. Fountain
Air Combat Command

Ideal job

I am sick and tired of all the complaints about how awful the big bully Air Force has treated people. The Air Force has given me

everything I asked for, and I in return have given it my time and commitment to duty. I don't recall being drafted; I don't recall a judge sentencing me to either prison or the military. I do recall saying, "Sure, why not?" with one hand in the air, not twisted behind my back.

Matthew Foulkes
Goodfellow AFB, Texas

Stop-Loss big mistake

No other branch of service has implemented Stop-Loss. Why did the Air Force? ... The Air Force has downsized too much and jobs outside the service are available, so the service is scared. I have eight years in, so when it's my time to get out, I have no more commitment to the Air Force. But if Stop-Loss is in effect, I'll be forced to stay.

Staff Sgt. Daniel N. Horgan
Tinker AFB, Okla.

It may take time, but it is inevitable

By Gen. Michael E. Ryan
Air Force Chief of Staff

For the last two and a half months, I have been perplexed by people who assert that the air campaign in Yugoslavia has not been effective. Misinformation abounds.

Let's remember how we came to this point with this conflict. It is because Slobodan Milosevic refused to abide by his promise to halt the repressive activities of his forces in Kosovo, refused to negotiate at Rambouillet and began the ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians. Having witnessed similar atrocities abetted by Milosevic in Bosnia, the United States and its NATO allies were morally compelled to act. The most available, effective and rapid means to strike back against Milosevic's aggression was air power.

Admittedly, the campaign did not begin the way that America normally would apply air power — massively, striking at strategic centers of gravity that support Milosevic and his oppressive regime. But, we are not in this conflict alone. We now have 18 NATO partners, some of whom were prepared to wage only a phased air operation to show NATO's resolve in the hope of achieving an early settlement. There were few who believed that tactically constrained air attacks on a dispersed infantry force, brutishly looting and burning villages, could alone halt the atrocities or reverse the refugee flow. But

we can and will destroy the army that has perpetrated those acts. It may take time, but it is inevitable.

By the time of NATO's summit in Washington — almost a month into the air campaign — it became apparent to NATO that a constrained, phased approach was not effective. At the insistence of U.S. leaders, NATO widened the air campaign to produce the strategic effects in Serbia proper. The results are becoming obvious.

Serbia's air force is essentially useless and its air defenses are dangerous but ineffective. Military armament production is destroyed. Military supply areas are under siege. Oil refinement has ceased and petroleum storage is systematically being destroyed. Electricity is sporadic, at best. Major transportation routes are cut.

NATO aircraft are attacking with impunity throughout the country. With the continued build-up of our aircraft and better weather, the attacks are intensifying and the effects are mounting. Cracks in the Yugoslav military and police forces are widening. Draftees are failing to report for duty. Unit desertions are on the rise. Protests against the regime are increasing. Serbian civilian leaders are calling for a settlement.

As President Clinton said about Milosevic, "He can cut his losses now and accept the basic requirements of a just peace, or he can continue to force military failure and economic ruin on his people. In the end, the outcome will be the same." Now Milosevic may be accepting the inevitable.

This air campaign has been executed with great precision and with great valor by NATO forces. Admittedly, we have had instances of collateral damage and unintended loss of life, but they have been few and inadvertent. We go

to great lengths to avoid harming innocent people — in fact, our aircrews often put themselves at greater risk just to minimize it.

Our forces have seen firsthand the destruction Milosevic has perpetrated against his own people in Kosovo solely because of their ethnicity and religion. We must stay the course. We know NATO's mission is just and NATO's actions justifiable, and we know NATO's forces will prevail.

It may take time, but it is inevitable.

Reprinted with permission from The Washington Post, where this article ran June 4, 1999, under the title "Air power is working in Kosovo."





Prevention programs

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throughout the military by the end of 1999. Every suicide prevention program, military or civilian, hopes to produce a drop in suicide rates, Dr. Bailey said, but this has rarely been achieved.

The Air Force pilot program showed a drop in the suicide rate from 15.8 per 100,000 people in fiscal year 1996 to below 3.5 per 100,000 for the first six months of fiscal 1999. This is more than 50 percent less than the lowest rate on record prior to 1995 and an 80 percent drop from the peak in the mid-1990s.

The pilot program demonstrated a community approach to building stronger people and resilient communities. The community approach to suicide prevention is successful, according to Dr. Bailey, because it requires active involvement by senior leadership, line officers and a broad coalition of military community agencies, including mental health, family support, child and youth, and chaplains.

The DOD-wide program will incorporate recommendations to mitigate risk factors and strengthen protective factors for suicide. These recommendations include:

- Widely distribute public service messages by DOD senior leaders that express concern about suicide and the importance of encouraging and protecting members who seek help;

- Debrief people and units following traumatic events;

- Establish annual suicide awareness and prevention training for all military service people;

- Integrate delivery of preventive services from six agencies: mental health, family advocacy, health and wellness centers, family support centers, child and youth centers, and the chaplains;

- Include suicide prevention training in all professional military education programs;

- Develop a more robust database of those who commit and attempt suicide so risk factors and trends can be analyzed and preventive measures taken; and

- Conduct unit risk-assessment surveys and unit intervention as needed.

This article is available in its entirety online.

SG solves fitness equation

By Staff Sgt. Michael Dorsey

WASHINGTON – Getting fit and staying fit add up to well-conditioned airmen, according to the Air Force surgeon general, offering his prescription to meet the demands of the expeditionary aerospace force.

Lt. Gen. Charles H. Roadman II talked with ONLINE NEWS about the basics for fitness as well as added steps the service might take to enhance overall physical ability, not just those needed to pass the cycle ergometry test.

“If you exercise three times a week for 30 minutes in your target heart zone, you will pass the test,” General Roadman said. “There are some couch potatoes out there who get lucky, but unless you have good parents with great genes, exercise and diet are the keys to staying fit.”

Because, as the general said, more than 20 percent of the force is overweight, the Air Force might add sit-ups, push-ups and sit-and-reach flexibility tests to its fitness standards. This is because the aerospace expeditionary force demands the highest level of fitness for all airmen.

Cycle ergometry measures only cardiovascular fitness. Adding muscular strength, endurance and flexibility measures, the surgeon general said, are critical for total fitness. The criteria for sit-ups, push-ups and flexibility – even deciding whether they are needed or not – will be set in July.

Any new fitness program will take effect Jan. 1 after airmen at these 12 bases complete testing: Bolling Air Force Base,



Fitness is a fundamental part of readiness. Because 20 percent of the Air Force is overweight, officials are considering adding sit-ups, push-ups and sit-and-reach flexibility tests to its fitness standards. Here, cadets from the U.S. Air Force Academy perform push-ups with an upper classman to stay fit.

D.C.; Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.; Des Moines Air National Guard Base, Iowa; Grand Forks AFB, N.D.; F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; Hickam AFB, Hawaii; Hurlburt Field, Fla.; Incirlik Air Base, Turkey; Randolph AFB, Texas; Shaw AFB, S.C.; Tinker AFB, Okla.; and the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

In shaping up the force, however, General Roadman doesn't feel testing airmen more often is the prescription to keep all airmen fit.

“It is not up to the Air Force to monitor one's physical fitness,” he said. “That is an individual responsibility.”

This article is available in its entirety online.

Base housing goes to American Indians

WASHINGTON – More than 600 excess Air Force housing units are moving to American Indian reservations during the next five years, giving low-income residents housing to improve life in their communities.

The program involving more than 20 American Indian tribes and the Air Force places excess federal property on Indian reservations and provides realistic training for military units.

Operation Walking Shield, which grew out of the downsizing of the nation's military forces, was conceived and developed by the Walking Shield American Indian Society in 1994.

The program began when Congress passes legislation in 1996 to allow Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D., to convey 463 housing units to the Rosebud Sioux, Standing Rock Sioux, Pine Ridge Sioux, Flandreau-Santee Sioux, Turtle Mountain Chippewa, Mandau, Hidasta and Ankara tribes.

The first six units were delivered in 1996, 88 units in 1997, 111 in 1998 and the remaining 258 will be delivered over the next two years.

This article is available in its entirety online.



AF space launch chief seeks complete review

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Agency and National Aeronautical and Space Administration to conduct an investigation into the series of launch failures and provide a report to the White House within 90 days. But even before the order was issued, an assortment of Air Force investigations had already begun.

"Because the six incidents were so close in time, it has caused us to scope up and take a bigger look into the whole picture," Colonel Puhek said. "Lockheed Martin and Boeing have also started their own investigations, so you've got a lot of people working on the problem at the same time."

Of the six launch failures, three were run by the government and three by the commercial industry. Although there does not appear to be a common cause for the failures, the president's commission will examine whether there is in fact a common problem.

As the broad area investigation continues, the separate investigation of the Titan IV failure in August has been completed with corrective actions already implemented. Two more investigations from the other launch accidents are also nearing completion.

"The investigation into the failure of the Titan IV that launched an early warning satellite April 9 is making excellent progress. They have their eye on pretty specific causes for failure, and I think they'll have it wrapped up in a couple of months, easily," said Col. Mike Dunn, Space and Missile Systems Center launch programs director, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.

He also said the investigation of the most recent Titan IV failure April 30 should be completed in July. The national investigation ordered by the White House, according to Colonel Dunn, can then take advantage of

these and other findings from both the military and contractors to determine what went wrong and why.

While both officers point out that the accidents in the last two launches using Titan rockets appear to have straightforward causes identified, Colonel Puhek said it is good that the Washington-directed investigation is taking place to look at the entire launch picture.

Colonel Dunn emphasized that space launch itself is still a risky business, especially with fewer dollars to spend.

"While a host of engineers work very, very hard to mitigate risks and provide mission success, it's an on-going challenge," he said. "We've tried to do things in a tight fiscal environment because we had to. By and large, it's been very successful, but I think we've added additional risks to the programs in some cases."

Compared to the elaborate and expensive safety and backup systems in place during the '60s and '70s, Colonel Puhek said, "some budget cuts may have affected our margin for

mission success."

Cost controls often translate into personnel cutbacks. Colonel Puhek said, "During such consolidations it is critical that we maintain the right level of government and industry expertise to continue space programs in the future."

The colonel pointed out that with about 25 launches scheduled for fiscal year 2000, the answers to myriad questions need to be found quickly to implement proper solutions. He admitted that the use of launch vehicles designed in the 1960s with present-day control technologies, safety measures and launch procedures can further complicate getting the right answers to those questions.

There's a lot at stake, according to Colonel Puhek. "America risks not only its upper hand in military space communications and technologies but also the lucrative business as the world's premier commercial space launch provider."

Air strikes continue after talks fail

WASHINGTON – Air strikes against military targets in Yugoslavia intensified the night of June 7 in the wake of failed peace talks between NATO and Yugoslav generals. NATO officials had vowed to continue and intensify the air campaign until an agreement is reached.

Although Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and his parliament reportedly agreed to terms of Serb withdrawal and the return of refugees to Kosovo, the NATO commander in Macedonia said the Yugoslav generals would not agree to the timetable set for



withdrawal of all Serb forces from Kosovo.

Meanwhile, foreign ministers of the world's seven major industrialized nations and Russia agreed June 8 on the wording of a draft resolution for the U.N. Security Council that would end the fighting in Kosovo.

The allies hope the resolution will lead to a new round of peace talks.



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